

RULE 13

Standards for Game Management

SECTION 1. Medical Provision

Minimum Medical Requirements

ARTICLE 1. The minimum medical facilities during a game are:

- a. • A registered doctor, registered nurse, registered paramedic or registered physiotherapist must be available. This person must not be a squad member.
- b. • A suitable first aid kit must be available.
- c. • A telephone capable of use to summon the emergency services must be available (**A.R. 13-1-1:II**).

NOTE: Available means inside or immediately outside the stadium and fit for use.

STOP, REPORT & SANCTION – Under no circumstances may the game commence, nor proceed if suspended. Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Minimum medical requirement not met.**

Approved Ruling 13-1-1

- I. If the game is suspended because of lack of medical provision, how long do you wait before abandoning the game? **RULING:** Rule 13-5-8-c applies: "The referee shall wait for a reasonable time to permit the problem(s) to be rectified. However, if it becomes clear that the game cannot continue, the referee shall abandon the game and notify game management." A reasonable time would be at least 30 minutes but probably not longer than an hour unless there was a clear indication that a resumption was imminent. Of course don't wait 30 minutes if it is obvious that a restart is never going to be possible.
- II. A mobile telephone is available, but due to poor reception conditions a reliable signal cannot be obtained. **RULING:** The game cannot proceed until either another mobile telephone with a better signal is found, or a working land-line telephone inside or immediately outside the stadium is available. [Cited by 13-1-1-c]

Medical Requirement Administration

- ARTICLE 2. a. • Game management is responsible for the provision and suitability of medical facilities that meet the requirements of Rule 13-1-1.
- b. • The senior game management representative shall certify to the referee prior to the game that the medical requirement has been met.
 - c. Game management shall inform the referee if at any stage during the game the medical requirement ceases to be met. The game will then be suspended (Rule 3-3-3-b).

SECTION 2. Changing Facilities

Changing Rooms

- ARTICLE 1. a. • Game management must provide changing rooms for the home team, the visiting team and the officials. These changing rooms should be separate and access to one should not be via another.
- b. • Each room must be large enough to accommodate the appropriate number of people, and must be available two hours prior to the scheduled kickoff time. The officials' changing room should accommodate at least a 4-man crew.

- c. • Seating must be provided, and each room should be clean, warm, dry and quiet. Washing (preferably shower) and toilet facilities are desirable. An adequate number of coat hooks should also be provided.

REPORT & SANCTION – Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Changing rooms not provided, not separate, not large enough, or without seating.**

Security and Access

ARTICLE 2. • Changing rooms should be secure, i.e. either the occupants should be provided with a key to the room, or a responsible member of the game management assigned to lock and unlock the room as required by the occupants. Game management should inform the occupants if there is any threat to the security of items left in the changing room.

REPORT & SANCTION – Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Changing rooms not secured.**

SECTION 3. Stadium Clocks

Minimum Standards for Game Clocks

ARTICLE 1. □ A stadium game clock is not mandatory but where provided must meet the following requirements:

- a. It shall be visible from all areas of the pitch. More than one clock is permissible.
- b. It must count downwards. A clock that only counts upwards shall not be used.
- c. The stadium clock operator shall have control of the game clock via a proper panel, and he shall be situated in a place from which he can see the entire playing surface including end zones.
- d. The clock controls must allow the following:
 1. Starting and stopping the clock.
 2. Setting the time to any value.
 3. Correcting of errors.
 4. Turning it off in case of malfunction.
- e. The clock shall be maintained regularly and checked for accuracy before each game.
- f. If a stadium game clock is provided, and the following criteria are satisfied, then the clock shall be used:
 1. The stadium clock shall comply with the minimum standards set out above.
 2. A competent operator shall be provided who has no duties during the game other than to operate the game clock.
 3. There shall be a means of communication between the on-field time keeper and the stadium clock operator.

Minimum Standards for Play Clocks

ARTICLE 2. 40/25-second clocks are not mandatory (overrules Rule 3-2-4-b) but where provided must meet the following requirements:

- a. At least two clocks shall be provided, situated at either end of the ground and visible to players in the field of play and end zones. The rules specify that if one clock is not working then the other shall be turned off.
- b. Clocks shall count downwards.
- c. A separate operator shall be provided to run the play clock.
- d. There should be a separate control box for the play clock.

- e. The control box for the play clock must allow the following:
 1. Starting and stopping the clock.
 2. Reset to 25 seconds.
 3. Reset to 40 seconds (if the 40/25-second rule is in force).
 4. Turning it off should malfunction occur or for game situations such as crowd noise delay, end of quarter, etc.
- f. If 0 seconds is reached the clock shall stop there automatically without counting further.
- g. The clock shall be maintained regularly and checked for accuracy before each game.

Procedures for Operating Game Clocks

- ARTICLE 3. a. The stadium game clock shall show the official time. It is up to the on-field time keeper, sideline assistant and stadium clock operator to work as a team to ensure that it always shows the correct time.
- b. The stadium clock (if it is working properly) shall be used as the official time piece. An unofficial stadium clock shall not be used.
 - c. If the clock malfunctions or if the operator is inadequate, the Referee should order the clock turned off and the game time kept only on the field. If this becomes necessary, the Referee must inform both head coaches, and an incident report made.

REPORT & SANCTION – Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

• Stadium clock malfunctions or operator is inadequate.

- d. Proper briefing of the stadium clock operator(s) is of paramount importance before any game.
- e. The stadium clock operator shall start the clock only on the Referee's signal (even if incorrect by rule) and stop it on his own positive knowledge that the clock should stop by rule or on the signal of an official.
- f. If the clock is stopped in error, the stadium clock operator shall restart it immediately.
- g. The on-field time keeper should ordinarily correct the stadium clock only after instances where a significant error has occurred.

Procedures for Operating Play Clocks

ARTICLE 4. If play clocks are provided and they meet the specified standards, they shall be used and shall be the official 40/25-second timers. Unofficial 40/25-second timers shall not be used.

Instructions to Stadium Game Clock Operators

ARTICLE 5. Prior to the game, an official shall inform the stadium clock operator of the length of the periods, and instruct him that:

- a. The clock should start on the Referee's winding signal only, or when the ball is snapped (whichever happens first). The clock must not be started if any other official gives a winding signal (*Exception:* during a free kick).
- b. The clock stops if any official gives a stopping the clock signal, or if a touchdown is scored, a safety conceded, a touchback declared, a field goal attempt scores or fails, or a forward pass is declared incomplete. Each of these latter signals stops the clock in its own right. The stadium clock operator shall stop the clock on his own positive knowledge that the clock should stop by rule.
- c. If the on-field time keeper wants the time displayed to be adjusted, he shall either:
 1. Order a correction by asking an assistant to use the walkie-talkie or phone line (if provided).

2. Use agreed signals during a time out or other convenient pause in the game.
3. Ask the Referee to use his radio-microphone to announce a correction.

Instructions to Stadium Play Clock Operators

ARTICLE 6. Prior to the game, an official shall instruct the play clock operator that:

- a. If the 40/25-second clock rule is in force, the play clock should start a 40-second count when an official signals the ball dead, unless the clock was stopped for one of the reasons set out in Rule 3-2-4-c.
- b. If the 40/25-second clock rule is not in force, the play clock should be reset to 25 seconds whenever, before the play clock reaches zero, the ball is snapped, kicked, or any official blows his whistle. Also the play clock should be reset to 25 seconds when the Referee signals (one open palm in an over-the-head pumping motion). The play clock should then be started whenever the Referee gives either the ready for play signal or a winding the clock signal simultaneously with blowing his whistle.
- c. If, before the play clock reaches zero, the ball is snapped, kicked, or any official blows his whistle, the time shall be reset immediately to 40 seconds (if the 40/25-second rule is in force) or 25 seconds (if not), and the clock shall not continue to count down.
- d. If the clock winds down to zero before the ball is snapped or kicked, it must be left showing 0 until the delay of game penalty is completed, and then reset to 25 seconds.
- e. There is one instance in the game when the play clock does not run:
 1. If the game clock is running with less than 40/25 seconds left in any quarter, the 40/25-second clock shall not run.
- f. If one of the two play clocks becomes inoperative, the other one must be turned off immediately.

SECTION 4. Game Personnel

Officials' Assistants

- ARTICLE 1. • a. Game management shall be responsible for providing 30 minutes prior to the kickoff a minimum of five persons to act as officials' assistants (ball persons and chain crew).
- b. The officials' assistants shall be appointed to the following duties:
 1. Down box operator.
 2. Stake operator #1.
 3. Stake operator #2.
 4. Ball person #1.
 5. Ball person #2.
 6. Chain clip operator (if six or more).
 7. Alternate line to gain stake operator (if seven or more).
 8. Alternate down box operator (if eight or more).
 9. Ball person #3 (if more than three balls are to be used).
 10. Ball person #4 (if more than three balls are to be used).
 - c. • It is mandatory that persons under the age of 14 years must not be used as officials' assistants. Teams are recommended to appoint a regular crew of assistants who will be available to do these jobs for every game.
 1. Officials' assistants under the age of 18 remain the responsibility of game management at all times, and must be supervised by a responsible person appointed by game management.

- d. □ It is desirable that officials' assistants be attired with brightly coloured vests to enable them to be distinguished on the sideline.
1. Down box operators: red.
 2. Stake operators and chain clip operator: 3-inch black and yellow stripes.
 3. Ball persons: dark blue with red diagonal stripes front and back.
- e. When provided with an inexperienced crew of assistants, the referee is recommended to use the best individual as down box operator, the next two best as stake operators, and the next two best as ball persons.
- f. Where only five assistants are available, the down box operator shall also perform the duties of the chain clip operator. Alternate operators are optional.

STOP, REPORT & SANCTION – Under no circumstances may the game commence, nor proceed if suspended. Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Officials' assistants under age 14.**
- **Fewer than minimum number of assistants provided.**

REPORT & SANCTION – Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Officials' assistants provided later than 30 minutes before kickoff.**

Water Carriers

- ARTICLE 2. a. Persons carrying liquid refreshment for use or consumption by players shall only be permitted on the field of play with the permission of the referee. (The referee may delegate the authority to give this permission to other officials if he so wishes.)
- b. The water carrier may only provide refreshment and may not communicate coaching information to players. Water carriers shall only be permitted on the field during charged team timeouts, two-minute warning timeouts, injury timeouts or between periods. It is a contravention of rule 9-2-1 for a water carrier to be on the field at any other time or without permission or to communicate with players.
- c. At other times when the ball is dead, a player may go to the team area for refreshment (but the water carrier must stay outside the sideline).

Liaison with Game Personnel

- ARTICLE 3. a. Prior to the kickoff, the officials shall carry out their pre-game duties including speaking to the following personnel:
1. Head coach of each team – to obtain coaches' certification and names/numbers of captains.
 2. Chain crew and ball persons – to brief them as to their duties.
 3. Public address announcers – to ensure familiarity with officials' signals, to ascertain what announcements are to be made and if and when the National Anthem is to be played.
 4. Clock operator (where provided) – to ensure familiarity with officials' signals and to be briefed on the mechanism to be used to correct errors on the stadium clock.
 5. Medical personnel – to ascertain their location.
- b. • Game personnel must be available to speak to the officials in the period 30-10 minutes prior to the start of the game.

Stewards

ARTICLE 4. • Game management shall be responsible for providing stewards to remove unauthorised persons from the team areas and within the limit lines.

SECTION 5. Cancellation, Suspension and Abandonment of Games

General Principle

ARTICLE 1. a. The referee shall be the sole arbiter in respect of decisions as to whether to cancel, delay, suspend or abandon the game, however he shall consult his fellow officials, and at all times keep game management and, where appropriate, both head coaches informed of the reason(s) for the cancellation, delay, suspension or abandonment, and, in the case of a delay or suspension, the likely duration.

1. The referee shall take into account, where available, the opinions of the senior medical person present and the senior groundsman present where their expertise is relevant to the decision made.
- b. The referee shall make every effort to play the game at the place and time scheduled, but if circumstances do not permit play to proceed he shall not hesitate to carry out the procedures specified here.

REPORT – The circumstances of any cancellation, delay, suspension or abandonment.

- c. Once the referee has made the decision to cancel or abandon a game, that decision shall only be reversed by mutual agreement of the referee and opposing head coaches. This includes agreement to change field at the same venue or change kickoff time. A change of venue or a change to the date on which the game is played must in addition have the agreement of the relevant competition authority.

Team Arrival

- ARTICLE 2. a. • The game shall not be cancelled if both teams have arrived at the ground prior to the scheduled kickoff time (even though they may not be ready to start at that time). In case of dispute, the scheduled kickoff time shall be defined to be the kickoff time notified to the referee.
- b. Where the kickoff is delayed because of the late arrival of a team, the offending team shall be penalised on the opening kickoff under rule 3-4-1-a. The referee may waive the penalty for circumstances beyond either team's control. (Note: delays due to traffic hold-ups, navigational difficulties, etc. are not to be considered as being beyond a team's control.)

Game Management

ARTICLE 3. • The referee shall delay the start of the game until such time as:

- a. The goal posts have been adequately padded according to rule.
- b. The match balls have been obtained and checked.
- c. The chain set has been obtained and checked.
- d. The officials' assistants have been briefed.
- e. The minimum medical requirement is met.

PENALTY – 10 yards from the succeeding spot (Rule 3-4-1-b) [S7 and S21].

The Field

ARTICLE 4. Rule 1-2-9-b authorises the referee to effect any improvement to the field surface deemed necessary for proper game administration. Rule 1-2-8-a authorises the referee to order the removal of any obstructions within the playing enclosure that constitute a hazard. The referee shall delay the start of the game until such time as these tasks are complete. A delay caused by circumstances under the control of the game management shall be considered a contravention of rule 3-4-1-b.

PENALTY – 10 yards from the succeeding spot (Rule 3-4-1-b) [S7 and S21].

Game Supervision

ARTICLE 5. a. • Rule 1-1-4 requires that a game be supervised by a minimum of three officials.

- b. • The referee (or the senior official present who shall act as the referee in the appointed referee's absence) shall delay the start of the game until three or more officials are present. If three or more officials are present at the scheduled kickoff time then the game shall proceed, even if more officials are expected to arrive shortly thereafter. Officials who arrive late shall be assimilated into the crew at the referee's discretion.
- c. Ø If fewer than three officials are available, persons who meet the minimum officiating requirement (attending the game as spectators or in another capacity) may be appointed officials with the agreement of the referee and the head coach (or his designated representative) of each team.
- d. • If one or more officials become incapacitated and the size of the crew drops below three then the referee (or senior official if the referee is incapacitated) shall suspend the game.

STOP, REPORT – Under no circumstances may the game commence, nor proceed if suspended. Fewer than three officials or persons who meet the officiating requirement.

REPORT – Any appointed official is not present or becomes incapacitated.

Approved Ruling 13-5-5

- I. Only two qualified officials turn up to a game. The following volunteer to be appointed to assist them in officiating the game: (a) a spectator who holds a BAFRA certificate of competency and is registered with BAFRA and BAFA; (b) a spectator who holds a BAFCA level-1 certification and is registered with BAFCA and BAFA; (c) a coach of one of the participating teams who holds a BAFCA level-1 certification and is registered with BAFCA and BAFA; (d) a spectator who used to hold a BAFRA certificate of competency but is no longer registered with BAFA; (e) a spectator who used to be a BAFCA level-1 certified coach but is no longer registered with BAFA; (f) a sideline assistant of one of the participating teams who used to hold a BAFCA level-1 certification but is no longer registered with BAFCA; (g) a sideline assistant of one of the participating teams who used to hold a BAFRA certificate of competency but is no longer registered with BAFRA.

RULING: In cases (a), (b) and (c), the individual may be appointed as an official with the agreement of the referee and the head coach of each team. In cases (d), (e), (f) and (g), the individual MAY NOT be appointed - only persons who are currently registered with BAFA as an official or coach meet the minimum officiating requirement (Rule 13-9-6-d).

Weather

ARTICLE 6. a. American football is a game designed to be played in any weather conditions except those that are judged hazardous to player, official or spectator safety (e.g. lightning).

- b. • The referee shall delay the start of the game or suspend a game in progress if conditions are construed to be hazardous to life or limb of the participants or spectators.

REPORT – Hazardous weather conditions.

Procedure for Delaying the Start of a Game

ARTICLE 7. a. If the referee delays the start of the game due to any of the reasons above, or for any other reason(s), he shall:

1. Notify game management of the reason(s) for the delay.
2. Wait at least one hour before cancelling the game, unless it is clear or becomes clear that the problem(s) will not be rectified (e.g. away team telephones to say they are not coming, or necessary equipment to improve the pitch surface is not available), then the referee shall immediately cancel the game without further delay.
3. Cancel the game if it is not started within 60 minutes of the scheduled kickoff time (or a specified longer period agreed unanimously by both head coaches and the referee).

Procedure for Suspending the Game

ARTICLE 8. a. The procedure for suspending the game is stipulated in Rule 3-3-3.

b. The referee shall suspend the game under the following circumstances:

1. If all match balls are illegal.
2. If the chain set is inoperative.
3. If one or more officials' assistants become unavailable or are dismissed due to incompetence.
4. If the medical cover drops below the minimum level.
5. If the field surface makes proper game administration impossible or an obstruction becomes a hazard.
6. If fewer than three officials are able to supervise the game, due to injury or for any other reason.
7. If weather conditions become hazardous to players, officials or spectators.
8. If the behaviour of any person is prejudicial to the orderly conduct of the game.
9. For any other reason which poses a hazard to player, official or spectator safety.
10. For any other contingency not covered by the rules.

c. The referee shall wait for a reasonable time to permit the problem(s) to be rectified.

However, if it becomes clear that the game cannot continue, the referee shall abandon the game and notify game management.

d. The referee shall abandon the game if it is not resumed within 60 minutes (or a specified longer period agreed unanimously by both head coaches and the referee).

REPORT – Game abandoned.

Competition Notification

ARTICLE 9. The referee shall make a report to the appropriate competition authority of all cancellations and abandonments and all delays and suspensions of more than five minutes duration. Shorter delays and suspensions may be reported at the referee's discretion.

REPORT – Game suspended for more than 5 minutes.

SECTION 6. Miscellaneous

Access to Officials

- ARTICLE 1. a. • Members of the game management staff, members of the press with enquiries, players and coaches shall only be allowed into the officials' changing room with the expressed permission of the referee (or in his absence the senior official present). This applies before, during and after the game.
- b. • The referee shall be available after the game to answer questions on rules and interpretations. The referee shall not be available to answer questions on judgement calls. Questions addressed to other officials shall be redirected to the referee.

REPORT & SANCTION – Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Unauthorised access to officials' changing room.**

Public Address Announcers

- ARTICLE 2. a. • Announcers must cooperate with the officials by not criticising judgement calls made by the officials. Whether the official gets a good view of the play or not, he can only call what he sees.
- b. • In order to ensure fairness to both teams, announcers must not describe the play to the advantage or disadvantage of either team, especially while the ball is live.

REPORT & SANCTION – Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

- **Infractions by public address announcers.**

Ceremonies

- ARTICLE 3. a. Team announcements should be completed before the start of the coin toss ceremony.
- b. If game management wishes, the toss of the coin at the start of the game may be performed by an individual or attended by a small group of persons. (This is not to be considered a contravention of rule 3-1-1.) Such persons shall not, however, be permitted to perform a kickoff.

SECTION 7. Sanctions

Authority for competitions to impose sanctions

ARTICLE 1. ∇ Competitions may impose sanctions on teams for breaches of mandatory game management rules.

- a. Sanctions shall be applied to the team responsible for game management (*Exception:* Rule 1-4-5-b-1).
1. No sanctions shall be applied if neither of the participating teams in a game is responsible for the management of the game.
 2. No sanction shall be applied if the breach is beyond the reasonable control of game management. Game management is expected to make contingency plans for all breaches that reasonably can be foreseen, and shall be liable if the contingency plan does not exist or cannot be implemented without good reason.
- b. ∇ Competitions may impose a time limit (normally in relation to the kickoff time) for the rectification of breaches, after which a sanction shall be imposed. The sanction may be imposed earlier if it is clear or becomes clear that the breach will not be rectified within the time limit. No sanction shall be imposed if the breach is rectified within the time limit.

- c. • Competitions must publish a list of sanctions before the start of the season to which they relate.
- d. ∇ Competitions may determine whether sanctions shall only apply in competitive games, or whether they shall also apply in non-competitive games organised by teams.

Possible sanctions

ARTICLE 2. • a. Competitions may impose any of the following sanctions for a game management breach (or any combination of these):

1. A warning about future breaches.
 2. A monetary fine.
 3. A restriction on the use of the venue where the breach occurred.
 4. Cancelling (or abandoning, if started) a game.
 5. Deduction of competition points or the award of the game.
- b. The sanction of warning about future breaches may only be applied for a first offence in a season of a particular breach.
 - c. The sanction of deducting competition points or awarding a game may only be applied in cases where there is evidence that the integrity of the game was compromised (i.e. a team did something to cheat).
 - d. The referee shall cancel the game (or abandon the game, if started) in cases where a competition sanction so specifies, and a mandatory breach is not rectified within the time limit (if specified).

Approved Ruling 13-7-2

- I. A league specifies that the sanction for the field of play being shorter than 90 yards is to cancel the game. The time limit for the rectification of breaches is 1 hour after kickoff time. On inspecting the field prior to the game, the referee notes that it is only 80 yards long.
RULING: The referee shall cancel the game 1 hour after the appointed kickoff time, or earlier if it is obvious that the breach will not be rectified.

SECTION 8. Amendments to NCAA Rules for British games

Status of the BAFA Regulations

- ARTICLE 1. a. No player who is not on his team's roster form may participate.
- b. A head coach may request a coach's conference with the referee if he believes an opposition player is not on the roster (Rule 3-3-4-e). If the player is on the roster, the coach's team shall be charged a timeout, or a delay penalty if all timeouts have been used.
(A.R. 13-8-1:I-IV)

PENALTY – Disqualification [S47].

Approved Ruling 13-8-1

- I. After the ball is dead, a Team B player requests a coach's conference because his coach believes that A99, who participated in the previous down, is not on his team's roster.
RULING: The referee shall check the roster form. If A99 is not on the form, disqualify him. If A99 is on the form, charge Team B with a timeout, or a delay penalty if all timeouts have been used. [Cited by 13-8-1-b]
- II. A Team A player leaves the field and A99 enters the field to replace him and communicates with a teammate or an official, enters the huddle, or is positioned in an offensive formation. A Team B player requests a coach's conference because his coach believes that A99 is not on his team's roster. **RULING:** The referee shall check the roster form. If A99 is not on the form, disqualify him. If A99 is on the form, charge Team B with a timeout, or a delay penalty if all timeouts have been used. [Cited by 13-8-1-b]
- III. During a down, an official observes player A99 who he believes is not on his team's roster form. **RULING:** Referee's timeout when the ball is dead. The referee shall check the roster form. If A99 is not on the form, disqualify him. If A99 is on the form, the game continues. [Cited by 13-8-1-b]

- IV. After the ball is dead, a Team B player requests a coach's conference because his coach believes that A18 and A99, who participated in the previous down, are not on their team's roster. After checking the roster form, the referee discovers that A18 is on the form but A99 isn't. **RULING:** Disqualify A99. Team B will not be charged for the coach's conference since at least part of their appeal was upheld. (Rule 13-8-1-b) [Cited by 13-8-1-b]

SECTION 9. Status of BAFA games

BAFA game

ARTICLE 1. • a. The following are categorised as BAFA games and subject to these rules:

1. A regular season or playoff game played by teams in leagues or other competitions affiliated to or sanctioned by BAFA.
2. Any other game played in Great Britain where at least one of the teams is affiliated to or sanctioned by BAFA or one of its member organisations.
3. Any "all-star" or exhibition game played in Great Britain involving persons sanctioned directly or indirectly by BAFA.

Controlled scrimmage

ARTICLE 2. • a. A controlled scrimmage is defined as a playing event between players representing the same club or two or more different clubs provided that:

1. No gate money is taken.
 2. The score is not published.
 3. It is not part of any competition.
 4. The primary purpose is the training and/or evaluation of players.
- b. A controlled scrimmage may be played under the supervision of licensed coaches.
- c. With the mutual agreement of the head coaches, the playing rules may be modified in ways that do not reduce the safety of the participants.

Age groups

ARTICLE 3. • The following age groups are defined in order to facilitate people in the same school year playing together:

- a. Under-19: is under 19 years on 31st December preceding the playing year.
- b. Under-17: is under 17 years on 31st December preceding the playing year.
- c. Under-15: is under 15 years on 31st August of the playing year.
- d. Under-13: is under 13 years on 31st August of the playing year.
- e. Under-11: is under 11 years on 31st August of the playing year.

The playing year commences on 1st March annually and runs to 28th/29th February of the following calendar year. A competition that starts before 1st March and ends on or after 1st March is considered to be part of the previous playing year.

Licensed coach

ARTICLE 4. • A coach is defined as licensed if, at the time of the game:

- a. He is registered with BAFA.
- b. He is registered with BAFCA.
- c. He holds public liability insurance for coaching.

Licensed official

ARTICLE 5. • An official is defined as licensed if, at the time of the game:

- a. He is registered with BAFA.
- b. He is registered with BAFRA.
- c. He holds public liability insurance for officiating.

Playing games

ARTICLE 6. • A BAFA game may not be played unless:

- a. All players meet any age group requirements.
- b. The players of each BAFA-affiliated team are registered with BAFA.
- c. The coaches of each BAFA-affiliated team are licensed and meet the minimum coaching requirement. All coaches must hold a current valid BAFCA Level 1 certification.
- d. The officials must be licensed and meet the minimum officiating requirement. All officials must hold either (a) a BAFRA certificate of competency; (b) a BAFRA qualification; or (c) a BAFCA Level 1 certification.
- e. The referee has declared the field safe and ready to play.
- f. The minimum medical requirements (Rule 13-1-1) are met.

STOP, REPORT & SANCTION – Under no circumstances may the game commence, nor proceed if suspended. Competitions may define sanctions for the following breaches:

• **BAFA game requirements not met.**

Participants risk not being fully covered by BAFA's insurance policy if this is violated.

Period between games

ARTICLE 7. • a. No game shall take place if, at its kickoff time, fewer than 36 hours have elapsed since the end of the last game played by either team. *Exceptions:*

1. Any flag football game.
2. A suspended game that is resumed.
3. Where a series of games is played on the same day, the series will count as a single game provided the total playing time is not more than the equivalent of 60 minutes (excluding extra periods).
4. Where an explicit waiver in writing has been provided by the Chair of the BAFA Rules Committee.